

- Good evening, and Happy St. Patrick's Day. My name is Ray Lang. I am the Director of State and Local Government Affairs for Amtrak, based in Chicago. It is a pleasure to be here with you tonight.
- As you know, Amtrak operates a number of trains in Michigan each day. Two of these trains, the *Blue Water* and the *Pere Marquette* are funded entirely by the State of Michigan, through a contract between Amtrak and the Michigan Department of Transportation. Michigan is one of 13 states around the country that contract with Amtrak to provide rail passenger service.
- The cost of the state-supported service in Michigan for the current year is \$7.1 million. For FY'06, Amtrak estimates that the cost will be the same, despite a significant increase in fuel charges and other minor inflationary cost increases. Amtrak has been able to hold the line on the overall cost of the service thanks in large part to strong ridership and revenue increases on the trains during the last year. In FY'04, the Chicago-Grand Rapids *Pere Marquette* set an all-time ridership record, and the Chicago-Port Huron *Blue Water*, which operated on a different schedule until late April, saw significant ridership increases after the schedule change. In fact, for the first five

months of FY'05, ridership on the two state supported Michigan services is up by nearly 20% on the *Blue Water* and by nearly 15% on the *Pere Marquette*.

- The ridership increases on the *Pere Marquette* can be attributed to a number of factors, the most significant of which is the hard work of the local grass roots marketing organization, WESTRAIN. As you may know, WESTRAIN is a coalition of community officials and activists that market and promote the train. The organization is funded each year by a \$100,000 state grant, which is used to purchase local advertising in the communities along the route. I cannot stress how impressed Amtrak is with the work of WESTRAIN. It serves as a model for other grass roots organizations that are emerging to promote Amtrak trains nationwide. In fact, thanks to another grant from the legislature this year, a new organization has been formed to market and promote the *Blue Water*.
- Amtrak remains very optimistic that ridership will continue to grow on all of our Michigan services. A new station is slated to open in New Buffalo later this year, and a major station renovation project is

nearing completion in Bangor. Furthermore, we expect to see speed increases on the Chicago-Detroit high-speed corridor this summer when we raise train speeds to 100 mph on a portion of that line. With so many good things happening, I hope that Amtrak and MDOT will continue to have the support of the legislature in the coming year.

- Thank you. I'll be happy to take any questions.



Amtrak Fact Sheet, Fiscal Year 2004 State of Michigan

Amtrak Service & Ridership

Amtrak serves Michigan with three daily *Wolverine Service* round-trips on the Chicago-Detroit-Pontiac route. Amtrak also operates the *Blue Water* (daily Port Huron-East Lansing-Chicago) and the *Pere Marquette* (daily Grand Rapids-Chicago) short-distance services through Michigan.

During FY04 Amtrak served the following Michigan locations:

<u>City</u>	<u>Ridership</u>
Albion	1,021
Ann Arbor	108,498
Bangor	2,647
Battle Creek	43,847
Birmingham	16,112
Canadian Border (to/from Canada at Port Huron)*	13,465
Dearborn	65,509
Detroit	53,729
Dowagiac	1,944
Durand	4,522
East Lansing	30,737
Flint	15,540
Grand Rapids	47,026
Greenfield Village	576
Holland	31,902
Jackson	22,752
Kalamazoo	75,345
Lapeer	5,401
New Buffalo	1,833
Niles	16,600
Pontiac	12,802
Port Huron	8,359
Royal Oak	17,575
St. Joseph/Benton Harbor	6,979
Total Michigan Ridership:	604,721

**Cross-border service ended 4/25/04.*

Procurement/Contracts

Amtrak expended \$2,858,461 for goods and services in Michigan in FY04. Much of this money was spent in Brighton, \$1,029,183.

Employment

During fiscal year 2004, Amtrak employed 133 Michigan residents. Total wages of Amtrak employees living in Michigan were \$6,434,967 during this period.

State-Assisted Services

The State of Michigan supports the operations of two daily train services, the *Blue Water* (Port Huron-East Lansing-Chicago), and the *Pere Marquette* (Grand Rapids-Chicago).

Facilities

In Niles, Michigan, Amtrak operates an engineering department branch that maintains the 97-mile track segment between Kalamazoo and Porter, Indiana. Here, employees maintain the track for high-speed service and are continuing work on increasing speeds along the Amtrak-owned segment.

Capital Projects

The 97-mile segment between Kalamazoo and Porter, Indiana, on the Detroit-Chicago route, is the longest stretch of track Amtrak owns outside of its Washington-New York-Boston Northeast Corridor. The Federal Railroad Administration has designated the Detroit-Chicago corridor as a high-speed corridor. Amtrak, in partnership with the FRA and the State of Michigan have developed a radio-based train communication system, called the Incremental Train Control System (ITCS), that is currently in high-speed revenue service on Amtrak-owned track in Michigan and works to prevent train-to-train collisions, train overspeed conditions, and protect on-track roadway workers.

The ultimate goal of this high-speed project is to reduce the total travel time between Detroit and Chicago from the current 5 ½ hours to 3 ½ hours. In January of 2002, 90 mile-per-hour service began on a segment of the Amtrak owned right-of-way. Additional speed increases to 95 mph and ultimately 110 over portions of the Amtrak-owned line are planned.



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